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Picnic time
Members of Haliburton Rotary stand in front of the newly built picnic structure at Skyline Park in Haliburton. For more photos, see inside this edition. /TIM YANO staff photographer

HE holds public meeting on Centre Lake development

ADAM FRISK
Journalist

The fate of a significant portion of the Centre Lake shoreline in Highlands East was once again before the municipal council, as the community grapples with a large-scale proposed subdivision.

The Municipality of Highlands East held a public meeting to review the Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw Amendments for the contentious project.

The application, filed by a private developer, outlined a proposed subdivision plan spanning approximately 431 hectares, with roughly 115 hectares designated for development. The land involved encompasses several lots in Concessions 12, 13, and 14 in Cardiff, as well as the adjacent Crown Reserve and Original Shore Road Allowance (SRA).

This isn't the first time local authorities have considered the development.

In 2021, council voted against supporting the transfer of the Crown land to the

see RESIDENTS page 12

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County tourism sees boom in visitors

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

This year's Hike Haliburton Festival saw nearly 2,000 participants, who explored the county through hikes on both public and private land. The festival is a major draw to boost business during a shoulder season. /FILE

Now in its 22nd year, Haliburton County's Hike Haliburton Festival has maintained its position as the largest hiking festival in Canada.

During last week's regular meeting of county council, manager of tourism Angelica Ingram provided members of council with a summary of tourism activity since the last tourism report in May 2025, part of the Economic Development and Tourism 2025 workplan.

Amongst the highlights of the report was information surrounding Hike Haliburton. Running over the weekend of Sept. 18 to 21, the festival attracted more than 1,870 participants who took part in hikes, experiences and events across the county. The festival included 44 guided hikes and more than 85 volunteers to contribute to its success.

"An enhanced marketing campaign was launched this year with the goal of driving more visitors to the My Haliburton Highlands website and to participate in Hike Haliburton," said Ingram in her report to council. "Preliminary results show the campaign was successful and many businesses are reporting an uptick in visitors/customers this past summer. Website analytics also show a significant increase in website traffic, compared to 2024 data."

Ingram noted that the festival serves as a key economic driver for shoulder season months, driving individuals from across the country to the community. "The festival attracted visitors from across Ontario and beyond, with a notable number of first-time visitors to the Highlands," said Ingram. "This year's festival crossed over with many other community events and activities, thus reinforcing the Haliburton Highlands reputation as a place where there is something for everyone."

Another key tourism initiative that Ingram reported on was the recent business summit, which was held on Sept. 23 at the S.G. Nesbitt Community Centre in Minden. With over 40 participants in attendance, the tourism manager reported that the event was a success. "This annual event continues to serve as a cornerstone event for the local business community, providing a platform for learning, networking, and collaboration," said Ingram. "The attendance reflected a diverse cross-section of industries, including tourism, not-for-profit, construction, professional services, and creative sectors."

> ***"This year's festival crossed over with many other community events and activities, thus reinforcing the Haliburton Highlands reputation as a place where there is something for everyone.***
>
> — Angelica Ingram, Manager of Tourism

Topics discussed at the summit included AI and digital tools for small business growth, as well as inclusive and accessible hiring practices and opportunities. "Strong partnerships with local chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and tourism associations helped shape the program," noted Ingram. "The event facilitated meaningful networking opportunities, with several attendees reporting new business connections and potential collaborations."

Ingram closed by outlining the successes of a new marketing campaign launched online by the county. "This past spring, staff launched a 2025 marketing campaign for the Haliburton Highlands that has proven to be successful, reaching a wide audience through a strategic mix of print, radio, and digital platforms," she said. "The campaign highlighted the region's natural beauty, cultural experiences, and year-round activities, creating consistent and compelling messages across all channels."

With the recent launch, Ingram has noticed an uptick in website traffic, with a July website reach of 36,200 total views, and 35,300 total views in August, which represents an increase of 31.5 per cent over the same months last year.

"These results confirm that the website is performing as a central tourism tool, both engaging new audiences and directing them to key seasonal experiences in the Haliburton Highlands," said Ingram. "Looking ahead to 2026, staff are already working on furthering this marketing strategy by creating a campaign that promotes shoulder season tourism, as well as looking at ways to improve the functionality of the My Haliburton Highlands website."

The staff report was received as information by council, with an additional report coming in the next quarter of the year.

NORAD eyes Kawartha Lakes for radar site

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

A new transmit site will be built just outside of Norland at 0 Thistle Trail Road in Kawartha Lakes. West of County Road 1, the transmit site will be built by the Department of National Defence (DND) as part of North American Aerospace Defense Command's (NORAD) modernization plan. The DND is investing in a Northern Approaches Surveillance System (NASS) to expand NORAD and the Canadian Armed Forces' awareness of objects approaching and entering Canadian airspace from the north. The NASS will also include the Arctic-Over-the-Horizon Radar system providing early warning coverage and threat tracking.

Transmitting antennas will be constructed. In preparation for the build, land will need to be flattened, obstacles would need to be removed and any forested areas or wetlands would need to be removed in order to not impede the radar's signal.

The site will have fully supportive infrastructure including a completely equipped and operational building, security features, maintenance and storage, an access road with parking, and full utilities.

The public comment period closed on Aug. 5 and the DND held two public engagement sessions on Sept. 9 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Both sessions filled the Coboconk Community Centre.

During the session, which was streamed online, citizens raised various concerns to DND over becoming a terrorist target, the impact similar sites have affected the environment in Australia, and how it will negatively affect residents' health.

One concerned resident says that Loggerhead Shrikes are known to live in the area. A representative from the DND said that from their environmental impact studies, they did not indicate that any species would be affected. The Western chorus frog lives nearby, but the DND is working on the permits to build in their habitat.

After bringing up concerns for their health and safety, DND representatives assured visitors that there is no direct harm to people from radiation with the transmit site.

One concerned resident, an avid ham radio enthusiast, was concerned that he could not continue with his radio hobby. A representative from DND acknowledged his concern and he was told to give them his contact information after the session.

The DND hopes that the site will be built by 2029.

They could not confirm that local residents would be hired to work at the site.

For more information about the transmit site and what this means for residents in the area, the DND can be contacted at 1-888-995-2534 or information@forces.gc.ca.

Canada Post strike drags on

ADAM FRISK

Journalist

As the Canada Post strike continues to drag on, municipalities in the county are reminding residents that bills still need to be paid.

As the mail service disruption enters its third week, townships have published notices reminding community members that bills, such as property taxes and dog tags, still need to be paid, either in person or online, despite not receiving payment notifications in the mail.

"Please note that due to the ongoing Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) strike, the Township of Algonquin Highlands is not receiving mail delivery at this time," one municipality said in a statement. "Residents are welcome to drop payments off in the secure drop box at the front entrance of the Township of Algonquin Highlands Administrative Office at 1123 North Shore Road."

The Township of Minden Hills sent out a similar statement late last week.

"During the strike, residents can make payments using various methods, including payment made at your financial institution, drop off a cheque at the 24-hour drop box (Township of Minden Hills Administrative Office – 7 Milne St.), or in person at Township of Minden Hills (7 Milne St.) during business hours," the statement said.

However, mail and parcels could start moving again after the postal workers' union announced late Thursday that it will move to rotating strikes, ending its nationwide strike action.

The post office pictured on Oct. 9 2025. /ADAM FRISK staff

"Starting Saturday, October 11 at 6 a.m. local time, CUPW will move from a nationwide strike action to rotating strikes," CUPW president Jan Simpson wrote in a notice. "This will start mail and parcels moving, while continuing our struggle for good collective agreements and a strong public postal service."

The announcement came a day after the union met with Transformation Minister Joël Lightbound, the federal minister responsible for Canada Post.

At the time of press, it remained unclear from the union how long it would take before residents would actually begin to receive mail again.

"We called on the minister to rescind his planned service cuts which he announced September 25," Simpson said in a statement. "However, at the end of the meeting, the minister said the announcements he made would stand."

Postal workers began a nationwide strike on Sept. 25. It's the second job action by postal workers in a year. The latest strike was launched after the federal government announced a major overhaul of Canada Post services to address its troubled finances.

Over the coming decade, the suggested cost-saving initiatives involve shuttering several rural post offices and shifting from daily door-to-door delivery to the use of community mailboxes. Meanwhile, the postal workers' union is against these proposed changes and is also demanding better pay and employment conditions.

Canada Post put forward several proposals, including a four-year wage contract that offered a 13.59 per cent cumulative increase in pay. The offer also featured up to seven weeks of vacation, comprehensive health and retirement benefits, and an allowance designed to protect against unexpected inflation.

"Due to the company's deteriorating financial situation, a signing bonus for employees is no longer on the table," the postal service said in a statement. "Canada Post's new offers are within the limit of what the corporation can afford while maintaining good jobs and benefits for employees over the long-term."

After the strike concludes, residents should anticipate delivery delays as Canada Post works to clear the large accumulation of mail and packages. The Crown corporation also noted that all service guarantees have been suspended for items that are already being processed.

The union said it will meet with Lightbound again this week.

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Barry Devolin, Maryam Monsef, and Heather Reid chat at the Lloyd Watson Community Hall in Wilberforce last week for session two of the Haliburton Highlands Healthy Democracy Project. /EMILY STONEHOUSE staff

Healthy Democracy Project looks at the big picture

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

The momentum around the Haliburton Highlands Healthy Democracy Project does not seem to be slowing down any time soon.

With their second presentation completed on Oct. 14 to over 60 attendees at the Lloyd Watson Hall in Wilberforce, the initiative seems to be picking up speed.

"Our goal is to make local government more accessible," opened Heather Reid, the host for the evening last week. "This evening's focus is on finding the 'why'."

While the first speakers series last month featured Jessica Slade, who discussed partnerships in action between communities and councils, the second installment of the series took a different approach.

The speakers were former Members of Parliament Barry Devolin and Maryam Monsef. While the two had different backgrounds and party affiliations, they were selected to speak based on the fact that they were no longer in politics; a primary goal for the non-partisan organization.

"I often tell people I'm a recovering politician," laughed Devolin, who has dabbled in many roles, including chief of staff, campaign manager, and the chair of numerous committees, on top of his days as MP for Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock. "I always had an interest in politics growing up, but I don't remember consciously deciding what level of politics."

Devolin noted that initially, he had a macro-lens when it came to political undercurrents, eager to hop into the world of diplomacy and travel. "My interest tends to be at the more national and international levels," he said.

He shared that the biggest difference between federal and provincial governments versus municipal governments is the fact that the larger scale politics is "a team sport," whereas in small towns, councillors are islands unto themselves. "People at a municipal level are involved as individuals," he said, noting the absence of political party affiliations at the level. "They can say whatever they want, whenever they want. You can speak freely at any time."

Monsef took her turn at the microphone to share a bit of her background. "I will tell you that democracy is contagious," she laughed. "The more people who get engaged, the more people want to be engaged."

She noted that her 'why' came in the form of inspiring a new wave of politicians. "There is no playbook for how to do politics," she said. "And social media has changed the landscape."

Originally hailing from Iran, Monsef ran to be the mayor of Peterborough at the age of 29. While she came in a close second in that race, she was later nominated as the Liberal Party candidate for the 2015 federal election, where she was elected with 43.8 per cent of the vote. She was appointed as Minister of Democratic Institutions in Justin Trudeau's Cabinet in 2015, Minister for Women and Gender Equality in 2017, Minister of International Development in 2019, and Minister of Rural Economic Development later that year. She has since retired from the political spotlight, to focus on supporting other individuals eager to pursue a career in politics in a safe and healthy way.

Her 'why', as she navigated her way up the ladder, was rooted in her family's early days of immigration to Canada. "The kindness of strangers in our most vulnerable time, you don't forget something like that," she said. "I always felt like I owed them a debt for that."

The two speakers mused on their day-to-day lives in the spotlight. Getting up early, taking calls, catching up on news, staying current within the ever-changing political landscapes. And while they both looked back on the time with innate fatigue and unsteady footing, it was apparent that their 'why' came in the form of helping their people, their communities.

With Devolin having deeply rooted ties to the region, and Monsef advancing as an advocate for vulnerable populations, in positions of power, they soared to make movement for the places that held them. "If you don't have a good enough 'why' then you're going to have a really hard time staying grounded on the hardest days," said Monsef.

Devolin agreed. "I would encourage you to get involved," he said. "But the first thing I would say is that you need to know yourself first. There's no single way to do public life. There are many different roads to success."

While the evening was designed to show the big picture of politics, the third installment of the Healthy Democracy Project series will bring it back to home, with an evening dedicated to behind the scenes of municipal government. The exact dates and times are not set in stone as of yet, but it is slated for the early spring; keeping topics top of mind as the community wades into the waters of an upcoming municipal election.

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OHTO reports slow summer start

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

With summer faded away, it means the kids are back to school. The leaves are changing and the traffic through town is tolerable again. October's beginning is a time for being thankful and along with our thanks, it was the Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization's (OHTO) AGM on Wednesday, Oct. 8. This year's meeting was held virtually through Zoom.

With the building tensions between Canada and the United States in the spring, this tourism season started off a bit rocky. Once July and August came, businesses got quite busy.

"It started slow, but ended with a bang," said Amy Hogue, content specialist.

Ride the Highlands was noted as one of the biggest draws to the Highlands region. As many people have heard the rumbling of motorcycle engines, the routes through Haliburton County continue to be a big draw this year.

Riders can collect patches while participating in Ride the Highlands. Notable, the main Ride the Highlands patch can be picked up at the Lakeview Motel in Haliburton. Our hospitality, winding roads, and hidden gems continue to attract riders from across Canada and the United States. As the program continues, its notoriety and popularity has seen tremendous growth in the past few years.

Last minute international visitors, particularly from Europe, provided a needed injection of income for operators across the province. Likely the tensions with the U.S. pushed people to book their vacation last minute. Some people also cancelled their typical vacation to the U.S. and chose Canada instead.

Another important aspect for tourism was cycling. Primarily, the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop development. The Eastern Ontario Rail Trail is being developed across Lanark, Renfrew, Frontenac, and the County of Rideau Lakes. The project is projected to add $65,000,000 in direct annual economic impact.

OHTO acknowledged that they are a small player in a crowded and competitive market.

Hogue said that OHTO is increasing their efforts to increase exposure through a multi-channel marketing strategy. They will be marketing through digital campaigns, partnerships, and Ride the Highlands.

This year they will be having a focus towards "Rural Roots" which celebrates small towns. The goal is to increase awareness of Ontario small towns and communities. They will also be incorporating referrals to county partners and using Google's advertising services.

Through the OHTO member portal and Come Wander website, visitors will soon be able to connect with operator's profile pages.

OHTO also announced that they will be collaborating with the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario (TIAO). TIAO will assist with them offering leadership training for new employees, skill development for staff, and connect people across their province-wide network.

The guest speaker for the AGM was Johanna Griggs, executive director of tourism development for Destination Canada.

Griggs said that in 2024, tourism contributed billions of dollars to Canada. One in every 10 jobs is related to the tourism industry.

"It surprises most people to know that the tourism sector produces more than twice the GDP of the automotive sector," said Griggs.

With the tourism industry, businesses often employ local workers and their profits are reinvested locally.

In a global survey, Canada was highly likely to be recommended to travellers from the United Kingdom, United States, Germany, and Mexico.

The money from tourism has surpassed pre-pandemic levels in inflation-adjusted terms.

"The high demand from our overseas market continues to grow despite some of the interruptions this summer," said Griggs.

She also said that there has been an increased intent for Canadians to travel within Canada this year.

"Canadian intent to visit the us has significantly declined," said Griggs.

Overall, Canada has been performing quite well in international markets.

"Canada is really having a moment," said Griggs. "I am hoping you are seeing this in your communities and businesses as well."

To attract more visitors, efforts should be made to attract those with a mindset that matches your community's values, be community-led, and engaging. In return, communities benefit from visitors through learning from other people's cultures, attracting potential residents and developers to the area. New businesses that open will contribute to the local workforce. This helps to support the community through continued growth.

One resource that may be beneficial to tourism operators is the Canadian Tourism Data Collective. The collective is powered by Destination Canada and is in collaboration with Statistics Canada and Innovation, Science, and Economic Development.

The program offers AI and analytics to make smarter and faster tourism decisions, anticipate trends, and help with marketing campaigns to get to your targeted audience.

"I encourage you to keep it Canadian and maintain that competitive advantage," said Griggs.

Share the Warmth – because everyone deserves winter comfort

Winter can be a difficult season for many in our community. Cold temperatures and the rising cost of living mean some families are facing winter without the essentials that keep them safe and warm.

That's why SIRCH Community Services is once again hosting Share the Warmth - a county-wide initiative ensuring everyone has access to coats, boots, hats, and other winter gear.

Last year, this program distributed over 1,100 free winter items to individuals and families across the region, easing the burden of winter and helping everyone face the cold with comfort, dignity, and community support.

You can help!

Between Oct. 9 and 30, drop off your clean, gently used winter gear at any of these locations:

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- Home Hardware
- St. Paul's Anglican Church
- Minden Valu-mart

Then join us at one of our Free Winter Gear Giveaway events:

Minden – St. Paul's Anglican Church, Friday, Nov. 8
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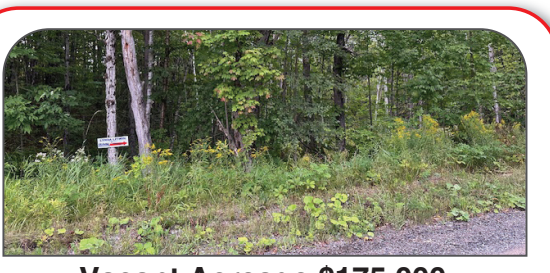

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Weaving words

Editorial

Emily Stonehouse

WE ALWAYS find a theme in our papers. One specific thread that seems to weave through our words, and when I tug at that thread, I generally find my topic for an editorial. The last piece of the puzzle each week.

And while there was council and conflict, disputes and differences, the theme for me this week was simple.

Our history.

It came to life on Oct. 7, in the form of a digital archiving system. A project that has been underway for two years found its way to light, and with it, came our opportunity to take a looking glass to the past.

With over 7,000 issued filed, containing over 170,000 pages, absolutely anyone can search the archives for anything they may need. Historically, our archiving system was sub-par, with about a decade of documents digitized, with the rest stored in banana boxes for safekeeping. (Not sure how safe those would be in the case of a flood or a fire, but no system is perfect.)

And of course, the first thing everyone with access to this resource will do, is search their own names. There are the big names that are found in seconds. Mayors, real estate agents, writers. Hundreds of hits identified, and a blast from the past as they're sorted.

But that's not the story here.

It's not about the ones with the hundreds of hits, while they have indeed made their mark on our communities.

It's about the ones with five, six, seven, eight hits. I was with a friend the other day, and I showed him the resource. Anyone can access it. The first thing he did was look up his grandfather. He remembered cutting out the page that had his feature on it, he shared that with pride.

Then he said, "look up my name. There probably won't be anything."

There were eight hits. There was a photo of him playing in the school band. A quote from him in Grade 3 about what he was thankful for at Thanksgiving. A prize he had won at the local Legion. His graduation photo. He scrolled through each and every paper, memories flooding his face. He looked at the names that surrounded his own, the faces that framed him, the individual moments in time, captured for the community.

Newspapers have a way of weaving together all the threads of the community. And threads vary. Some are frayed, some are dyed, some are twisted and curled. Some have depths of colour, others are feathered with time.

But together, they weave and wind together to create a patchwork of personalities, a quilt of qualities, a canvas of community.

We are only as strong as our weakest knot.

To see your name included in this archive of community history, to know that in some part, either big or small, you contributed to the quilt, that's validating. That makes you feel seen, feel heard, feel like you are a part of something much bigger than yourself.

Thank you to the team who brought this resource to life. It can be viewed at www.hhda.ca, and is currently live for anyone interested.

Our stories connect us; to our past, our present, our future. And in order to look forward with hope and promise, we must take the time to look back at the lives woven together to create our path.

Dolly's not dead

Humans & Technology

Erin Kernohan-Berning

MISREPORTED CELEBRITY deaths are nothing new and have occurred over nearly every medium. Mark Twain's death was famously misreported on in newspapers in 1897 which elicited the quote "The report of my death is an exaggeration." Winston Churchill's death was reported on January 18, 1965, when a CBC television station accidentally released a pre-recorded tribute from Lester B. Pearson, resulting in at least one radio station reporting that Churchill had died. Churchill had a stroke on January 15 but would not die until January 24. Enough Alice Cooper fans were fooled by a satirical obituary in the magazine *Melody Maker* in the 1970s that he had to release the statement "I'm alive, and drunk as usual."

AI image and video generators have lent a totally new dimension to misreported celebrity deaths. Early last week, Dolly Parton's sister, Freida, posted on Facebook that she was praying for her sister who hadn't been feeling well, urging fans to also pray for her. This led to an internet uproar with speculation flying that the country music star must be on death's door. Parton had recently cancelled some tour dates citing health issues and upcoming procedures – and while the vague statement was likely to maintain some small amount of privacy, it did little to stop the rumour mill from churning.

On October 8, Dolly Parton posted a video with the caption "I ain't dead yet!" to TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook, explaining that, like Mark Twain, reports of her death had been exaggerated. Yes, she has been dealing with some health issues, but (in her words), "nothing major."

There's a saying that's been attributed to Mark Twain and Winston Churchill (but said by neither): "A lie gets halfway around the world before the truth has a chance to get its pants on." Today, a lie gets halfway around the world and the truth has to wade through a deluge of AI generated images to try and catch up. In the wake of Freida Parton's post, a flood of AI slop featuring Reba McEntire (among other famous people) at Dolly Parton's deathbed was posted to numerous Facebook sites using the internet speculation to generate traffic and clicks. A search for Dolly Parton on Facebook shows Parton's official Facebook post as the second result sandwiched between two of these fake images.

It's important to remember that in an ad-driven attention economy, our attention, likes, clicks, and views all translate to actual money for the people running fake news pages and websites. Where Parton's official post is currently sitting at over 800,000 likes, many of the posts featuring lies, AI generated slop and dodgy website links have also garnered likes in the tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands.

Another worrying aspect of this is the number of comments questioning whether Parton's video was created with AI. Unfortunately, this is a fair question on the internet right now with tools like OpenAI's Sora and Google's Veo 3 video generators making deepfakes even more convincing and easy for anyone to make. While Sora videos come with an identifying watermark, users have quickly figured out how to remove it. AI has upended how we trust, or don't trust, what we see with our own eyes.

Parton's video is real. It's been reported on by numerous news outlets (not dodgy fake news sites), posted to her official social media accounts, and boosted by the social media accounts of her family. The video itself contains none of the weirdness and anomalies that AI video is still prone to and is shot in such a way that we see the context of where Parton was working (a green screen set being used to film commercials for the Grand Ol' Opry) before settling on Dolly herself without any edits.

For me, this lack of trust in a shared reality is one of the more frightening risks of AI. Companies like OpenAI, X, Meta, and Google are rushing to release more powerful applications that can create fake but very convincing videos without fully understanding (or caring) how the technology can be used to undermine public trust. It's not just the deepfakes that we need to worry about, but how the deepfakes cause us to not trust the truth when it is right in front of us.

At least, as of me writing this, Dolly Parton is alive and well. But we should all use this lesson to brush up on our media literacy skills and develop our discernment when interacting with online content. One of the most important things you can do, if nothing else, is not engage if you're in doubt about the veracity of a picture or video. Content needs our likes and shares to spread, and if you just scroll past you can limit how far the lie travels.

points of view

Making life easy

IT SEEMS to me that smart people are always finding short cuts to make life easier.

A great example of this was given to us by the artist who coined the phrase, "I've drawn a blank."

My guess is that this genius initially uttered the sentence in the first year of art school after being asked to do an in-class assignment.

Everyone else was probably working hard to sketch a fruit bowl or a naked human form. The keeners were probably trying to sketch a naked human form in a fruit bowl. But not this person. No, this person just handed in an untouched canvas and uttered that now famous phrase "I've drawn a blank."

I suspect he got an A-plus and perhaps a federal arts council grant too. More importantly, that artistic trail-blazer showed people like me the path to take every time our spouse asks, "Did you do this?" in an uncertain, yet accusatory, tone of voice.

Loon Tales

Steve Galea

Not enough credit has been given to that artist for this.

But, as you probably surmised, this phrase cannot always be used. For instance, it is not going to get you anywhere if your art teacher asks you to draw a live round of ammunition.

Fortunately, there are other helpful phrases.

Another one that has come in handy for me on countless occasions is, "What do you think?"

Most times this gets deployed when I no longer have anything intelligent to say – so, approximately 43 times in an average week.

"What do you think?" is an excellent way to raise your perceived IQ in the estimation of the person you posed the question to.

It works like this. They start off the process by asking you a complex question or one than requires more intelligent commentary, or diplomacy than you are capable of mustering. You answer with, "What do you think?"

Anyone asked that will happily tell you. Moreover, if you indulge them correctly, mostly by nodding, the telling could take as long as three days.

Now, here's the important part. When they are finished speaking, you respond with an enthusiastic "Exactly!"

The person you say this to will naturally assume you agree with their assessment entirely – and there is no better way to make another person deem you to be smart, than to appear to agree with them.

But here's the great part, "Exactly!" is also just vague enough to give yourself some wiggle room.

Later, for instance, if their assessment turns out to be stupid, you can argue that you said "Exactly!" not to agree with them, but rather to confirm that's exactly what you thought they were thinking …

Then, you can follow up with, "I was actually thinking something totally different."

And, if pressed as to what that was, you can finally revert to "I've drawn a blank."

On the other hand, if you ask a person "What do you think?" and they immediately shrug and ask the same of you, the conversation is over – and you can both move on with the understanding that neither person needs to speak of this ever again.

These two phrases have been foundational to my success in life up to this point – which, in hindsight might not be the best endorsement.

I'd tell you more, but I have drawn a blank. So, what do you think?

pic *of the* past

Do you recognize where this photo was taken? The photo depicts a part of the railway line along Head Lake. Jack Brohm submitted the photo and thinks it was taken in the early 1950s.

Barns

MONIKA WAS enthralled with what she saw. Sitting in the passenger seat, she gazed out the window as the colourful world sped by. The earlier clouds had parted and now the sun was streaming over and through the autumn trees like maple syrup spilling over a plate of pancakes.

She and Jim were headed out of town for a Sunday drive. After a week of non-stop garden clean-up and other outdoor chores, she was ready for a change and so was he. Thankful to not have to do the driving, Monika was enjoying the luxury of watching the landscape pass by.

Dense forest was giving way to agricultural scenes as cows grazed and old homesteads stood abandoned to the weeds. Barns were especially evocative to Monika and she was always saddened to see some of the old ones with missing boards or collapsed roofs.

Down Our road

Sharon Lynch

Although she no longer lived on a farm, she had fond memories of barns and never passed up an opportunity to visit one. Unfortunately these days, barns seemed to have gone increasingly out of style, replaced with factory-built metal structures. To Monika those looked strictly utilitarian, with no soul or individuality.

Her family's barn had been a gem. Despite its age it had stood solid and proud on a small rise away from the house. Whenever she entered the raised front doors, the smell of hay and straw had been the first to greet her. Then underneath it was manure from the stalls below. Because it was built on a small hill the barnyard was at the back, opening from the stalls. What a mess it had been every spring, she remembered. The stalls were cleaned out and dumped in the yard, producing a pungent mushy reminder of the inhabitants. She could see the heat rising as she skirted around the outside on her way to the orchard. There was always dead-fall after the winter, bits of apple trees to be cleaned up, lying about in the bright spring sunshine.

What was it about the barn she had liked so much? Perhaps that it had stood so long with dignity and purpose. Solid and weathered on the outside, it had endured decades of changing seasons while remaining constant itself. If a sudden rain came up while she was nearby, Monika had been able to quickly seek shelter in its warm and fragrant interior. She liked to speculate how it was originally built. Who and how many had done the work? Where did they get the beams and stones for the foundation? There was no one left to answer.

When she and Jim passed the scattered family farms that remained, the sight of a well-kept farmhouse, sturdy barn and other outbuildings with maybe an orchard nearby gave them both a lift. In an increasingly technical and fractured world, these places reminded them the world had once been so different. Some might argue that was the cost of progress. But Monika and Jim preferred barns and all that came with them.

letters to the editor

Thanks to local fire team

To the Editor,

The following is a letter that was sent to community firefighters in light of a bush fire that took place on Oct. 6. The residents of Loon Lake wish to extend gratitude to all those who kept the community safe.

Good morning Chief Chumbley,

I just wanted to express my gratitude and that of my community to your staffs actions (and that of our mutual aid partners whom responded to assist Dysart) in regards to the fire at Loon Lake off of Highway #118 on the evening of Monday Oct 6.

Here for your team is a picture giving the perspective from the lake. With wind conditions and topography of the hill on the north side of Loon Lake, it would make for a challenging response. Your team's actions were quick, effective, and professional.

Keep up the great work Chief. Us residents never ever want to see our first responders in action close to home, but when required you responded and mitigated a significant brush fire. If allowed to move beyond the containment perimeter and beyond the reach of handlines and pumping capacity, this fire would have threatened the Long Lake community including multiple properties along its south shore at the west end of Long Lake.

Thanks again Chief and please extend my gratitude to your team.

Warm regards.

Doug Harper (Platoon Chief Toronto Fire retired)
Gregory Lane
Loon Lake, Haliburton

A capture of the fire that rose above Loon Lake last week. Photo taken by Sue Harper.

Halls Island artist residency takes a pause

After seven years of welcoming creative artists of all disciplines to Koshlong Lake, Halls Island Artist Residency hosted its final residency guests in September, 2025.

The central Ontario residency, located at an off-grid island on Koshlong Lake, has inspired artists from as far away as upstate New York, British Columbia, and Newfoundland, as well as local Haliburton County artists. Since 2019, over 100 painters, photographers, sculptors, novelists, poets, actors, songwriters and musicians discovered inspiration as they engaged with nature and pursued their creative endeavours in this beautiful setting.

Halls Island is privately owned by the Fraser-Hughes family whose generosity provided the residency, accommodations and island access for all the chosen artists. The family is enormously grateful for the local support of the Haliburton County Community Cooperative and the volunteers who served on the Management Committee.

"In 2018 we were joined in a vision by the Haliburton County Community Cooperative and several local volunteers to build a program that inspired artists from all over Canada and elsewhere to visit a peaceful refuge on Koshlong Lake. Word quickly spread and each year more and more creative people, duos and groups applied to become part of the Halls Island experience. These artists became alumni of the special and inspiring space that the island offered," a spokesperson for the Fraser-Hughes family commented.

"We are now going to take a pause and consult with our former artists in residence and consider reimagining the future of this magical place. It has been an honour and privilege to work with our partners and provide an exceptional experience for so many worthy and creative Friends of Halls Island. Our thanks to Abbey Gardens, Haliburton County Museum, Haliburton County Public Library, the Arts Council Haliburton Highlands, Haliburton County Development Corporation, TD Ready Fund, Haliburton County Folk Society, YMCA Camp Wanakita, Koshlong Lake supporters, and the volunteer Management Committee and Artist Selection Committee members.

With gratitude, the Fraser-Hughes family."

Visitors to the Halls Island Artist Residency website at www.hallsisland.ca will find information on all the residency artists who have stayed at Halls Island over the years, as well as any updates on Halls Island future opportunities. The island is not open to the public and for now, will return to private family uses.

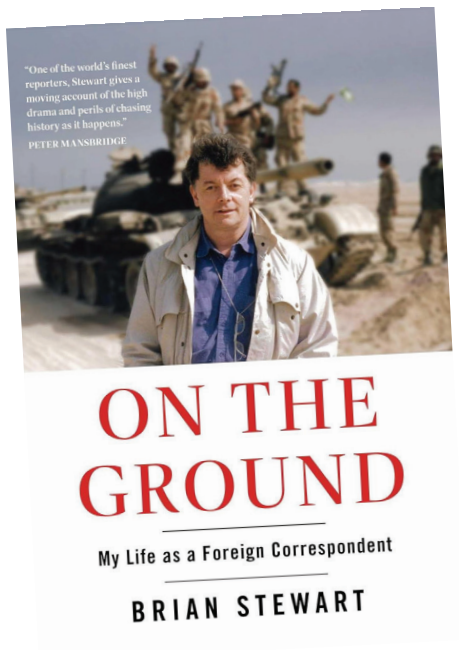
Submitted

Minden Memories

Pencil-and-watercolour Halloween advertisement (1933), attributed to Illa Welch. /Photo courtesy of the Minden Hills Cultural Centre

Book of the Week

HALIBURTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY


"One of the world's finest reporters, Stewart gives a moving account of the high drama and perils of chasing history as it happens."
PETER MANSBRIDGE
ON THE GROUND
My Life as a Foreign Correspondent
BRIAN STEWART

For decades, Brian Stewart was a trusted voice on CBC's *The National*, bringing the world's triumphs and tragedies into Canadian homes. From the Gulf War to the Ethiopian famine, he reported amid sandstorms and shootouts, speaking with world leaders, militants, and aid workers alike.

In *On the Ground*, Stewart reflects for the first time on the personal and professional cost of bearing witness to history. Both a sweeping journey through late 20th-century conflict and change, and a candid meditation on journalism's responsibility, it is the story of a reporter driven by courage, curiosity, and the belief in truth's power to matter.

On the Ground by Brian Stewart is available to borrow from the Haliburton County Public Library. To place a hold or learn more, visit haliburtonlibrary.ca.

Perkins returns to tell her stories

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

Former editor of the *Haliburton Echo,* Martha Perkins, addressed a full crowd at last week's Speakers Series at the Pinestone. /EMILY STONEHOUSE staff

Martha Perkins.

It's a name not new to longtime locals. It led the masthead of our local media for a quarter of a century, when she dedicated her life and times to sharing the stories of our communities.

She's led a vibrant and vivacious life, exploring different corners of the world, but with a clearcut slab of her heart dedicated to the Haliburton Highlands; a string that tied her to our cozy corners no matter how far she wandered.

And last week, she returned. Not for long, just for a quick visit. An opportunity to see familiar faces, and take her place on the stage at the Pinestone to participate in the monthly Telling Our Stories Speakers Series last Wednesday.

"It's amazing to see you all," she opened to a very full house, packed into the hotel's ballroom on the first frosty night of the season. "I want to start with a story …"

Martha Perkins. I personally have known her the majority of my life. First as a local, who observed her with awe while she confidently snapped shots at elementary school cross country meets and small-town plays. Next as a mentor, when I started with the *Haliburton Echo* as a co-op student when I was 16. And finally, as a friend, as our worlds drifted apart but our stories bound us together.

And now I write her name, as the current editor of the newspaper she poured her heart and soul into. It's a 'pinch-me' full-circle moment.

But this story isn't about her journeys around the globe, the notable figures she interviewed, the accolades she accumulated over the years.

It's about her stories. Her ability to cut to the heart of the narrative, and connect a community through her words.

Perkins began her presentation to the room by setting the stage: spring, 1999. A glorious day, when the snow had just started to make its journey from crusty winter remnants to babbling brooks.

She had been tasked with covering the opening of the Kinmount Medical Centre. And while she mumbled and grumbled on her drive to Kinmount - the shame in dedicating a beauty of a day to a work-based task - once she arrived, she poured herself into the setting. "This is incredible," she recalled, "this small village has done all this."

Like she did with any story, Perkins wrapped herself into the stories, the history, the people who made it happen.

But that day changed things for her, in a way she didn't see coming. Near the end of the opening, she was approached by a man who came to say one thing: "I can't wait for newspapers to die."

She was accused of being a gatekeeper of information, of adding capitalistic gains to stories, of limiting freedom of thought, freedom of speech.

And that statement got her thinking. "Why was I there?" she reflected. "Why had I decided to do this?"

It's a question that most journalists ask themselves on a highly frequent basis. If you don't ask yourself that, you're likely doing it wrong.

But it tied her to her 'why'. "We all have to care about each other," she said. "If we don't care about each other, no one is going to care about us."

This was a lesson embedded in her core from a young age. Having grown up in Lindsay, her mother often sent her to neighbours, to spend time with the aging community. While she initially objected, questioning what she would discuss with the different demographics, her mother encouraged her to move ahead. "You've got a mouth," she would say. "Use it."

So she learned. She started asking questions. Noting framed photos on the walls and asking about backstories. She discovered the magic that happens when you stop just listening, and really start hearing. There's always more to any story.

Upon direction from her school guidance counsellor, Perkins pursued a journalism degree from the former Ryerson University in Toronto. "You work to find your passion," she said. "And that was me."

She returned to Lindsay to work for the local paper there, but when an opening came up in Haliburton, she saw her chance to find her footing in the Highlands.

But before long, upon landing in the community as a bubbly 22-year-old in 1985, she began to question her decisions. "What am I doing here?" she asked, looking around the community of small-town lifestyles and untapped stories.

"But I started to learn so much," she reflected. "I started to talk, but more importantly, I started to listen. I started realizing how little I knew."

Perkins reflected on a time of literal cut and paste papers, when a production day consisted of typewriters and gluesticks. "It was very much a team effort, but we were all working for something together," she remembered. "And we really believed in what we were doing."

As she eased her way into the community and the role, her mindset began to shift. Arriving in the 1980s, she had a direct link to locals who called the community home at the turn of the century, and the wealth of stories that came with them. It was a golden age in newspapers, and a treasure trove of historical fragments that had spent decades scattered around. "Communities are made by thousands of little threads," she said. "When we allow them to be woven together, we are so strong."

Perkins reflected on the many stories she shared during her tenure as editor for the *Haliburton Echo* and the *Minden Times.* Oscar Peterson, Elva Cooper, Bob Sisson, Sir Edmund Hillary, Creighton Feir, to name a few. "The past is the DNA of this county," she said, noting the hundreds of stories she has woven together over the years.

This segued nicely into one of the primary reasons Perkins returned to the community since settling in Vancouver several years ago: the digital archiving of every local newspaper.

A thought that came as nothing more than a vague idea has taken nearly two years to complete, but with the support of Perkins alongside a dedicated board with Barb Bolin at the helm, every available newspaper in Haliburton County has been digitized and can be accessed online. That's over 7,000 issues, and over 170,000 pages, with the earliest dating back to Jan. 13, 1888.

Ted Brandon led the charge on the project once the ball was rolling, and under the umbrella of the Haliburton County Community Co-operative, the online resource has been live as of Oct. 7. It can be accessed via www.hhda.ca, and the committee encourages anyone with newspapers prior to 1980 to drop them off as local libraries, as there are a few gaps in the collection.

But this tie to the past, this preservation of community history, brought the quarter of a century that Perkins poured into this community suddenly to life. Historically, archived papers have sat in banana boxes in local basements and libraries for literal centuries, and now, the past is available at the click of a button, weaving the stories of our community into the present day.

"I want people to meet these people," said Perkins, referencing the many stories she had shared over the years, "please try to keep those threads between us strong. People want to be heard, but more importantly, we want to be seen."

And in that packed room at the Pinestone, people squished into seats because somewhere along their journey, they had felt seen by Martha Perkins. The way she captured their stories, their highs, their lows, their soccer games and cross country meets and small-town theatre debuts.

And it was a reminder for the value of local journalism, and its ability to weave the lives together in this place we call home. Because it's not about what we do or how we do it.

It's about the stories we share, and the people we celebrate.

Studio Tour success

This past weekend was the second and last weekend for the Haliburton County Studio Tour for this year. Artists opened their doors to welcome the public into their studios, and showcase their work for the year. The fan-favourite fall event welcomed hundreds of visitors to the sites. Pictured to the right, Jen Hodges showcases her work. /TIM YANO staff photographer

he Classic Pinwheel
he pinwheel quilt was the
irst "real" quilt I ever made.
t was my father's favorite
quilt pattern. He
remembered his Mom using
all the bit and pieces of
fabrics she could find to
make them for their beds.

Shelley van Nood stands in front of one of her beautiful quilts.

Susan Hay in her studio showcasing her paintings.

Haliburton Paddle Shop moves to Minden

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

Pictured, Maria Paterson and Corey Pietryszyn have just opened their doors in Minden, and welcome all to pop in for a visit. /EMILY STONEHOUSE staff

When you walk into the Haliburton Paddle Shop, the space feels alive.

Corey Pietryszyn feels it too. And as he looks around his newly-opened business on the corner of County Road 21 and Highway 35 in Minden, there's an air of possibility.

As a lifelong woodworker, Pietryszyn honed in on his paddle making skills during a stint at Haliburton Forest, where he took the lead on their paddle production, nestled deep in the wild woods of the property.

After a few years, his partner in business and in life, Maria Paterson, joined forces with Pietryszyn at the shop. Before long, they were seeking an opportunity to expand not only their audience, but their skillsets as well. They moved on from Haliburton Forest, ready to spread their wings. "We had taken over the business at the Forest," shared Paterson, "and we ran it out of that location for six months."

But when the Dock Shop opened up their location at 21 and 35, Paterson and Pietryszyn were offered an opportunity to partner with like-minded businesses and manufacturers. "Corey had this great vision," said Paterson. "He took one look around the space, and said we could make this work."

The building would be known by many locals as the former home of County Sign, which has since moved farther along Highway 35. While the space seems small on the outside, with financial backing from Haliburton County Development Corporation, as well as unwavering support from family and friends, Pietryszyn has retrofitted the compact building to accommodate all his needs when creating a paddle. "It tightens the process," he said, "everything has a place, and it's become a nice, tight circuit."

And really, the couple agrees that they do not need all that much space. While they have partnered with a number of outfitters, they are not in the business of mass production. "We're into the custom paddle side of things," said Paterson. "We don't do cookie cutter," echoed Pietryszyn, noting that on average, they aim to create about five paddles a day.

That's the beauty of Haliburton Paddle Shop pieces. Each and every piece is entirely unique. "Custom" does not just mean laser engravings and stencils (though they do offer those as well), it's also the grain of the wood, the style of the blade, the shape of the grip. All the pieces that fit together to allow the paddler an opportunity to connect with nature, to be present in the moment. "A paddle is going to talk to you," said Paterson. "You can pick one up, and know that's the right one for you."

And each piece of wood offers a world of opportunities. With sustainability in mind, Paterson and Pietryszyn make their best efforts to utilize every bit of sustainably sourced wood they can. Scraps from the paddles are whittled down to become charcuterie boards, wooden bow ties, or paddle holders. The sawdust is re-purposed for critter beds or garden mulch. The stain on the final product is hemp oil, which is biodegradable and food safe. Every piece of the paddle puzzle is mindfully crafted, masterfully articulated.

"At some point, it stops becoming a piece of wood," reflected Pietryszyn, "and the object begins to take its own shape, its own form."

Paterson and Pietryszyn have had their doors open for a few weeks, at this point, but are still getting into the swing of things with regular hours. Their custom orders have included sales to Japan, Germany, France, and Scotland, to name a few, and they've been catching up on an order from the Canadian Canoe Museum, as well as a number of 'usable art' pieces; paddles used for wedding guestbooks, family mementos, or retirement gifts. They are currently open on random days through the week, as well as most weekends, and encourage anyone interested in seeing the paddle process to come in.

Because at their heart and soul, they are deeply immersed in the community. Utilizing local suppliers for wood, partnering with small businesses to create custom pieces, and following the needs and interests of eager paddlers who explore the hundreds of lakes in our backyard. To reach the Haliburton Paddle Shop, contact 705-457-7071, or visit their website at www.haliburtonpaddleshop.com. They can be found on social media by searching Haliburton Paddle Shop, and maintain an active presence online.

"We're just getting started," said Pietryszyn. "There's so much room for both of us to grow and learn from each other."

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Ambitious new youth and family hub planned for County

ADAM FRISK

Journalist

A new, expanded facility is on the horizon for Haliburton County, with plans for a dedicated youth and family hub to replace the current, over-capacity youth centre.

Point in Time Centre for Children Youth and Parents announced earlier this month it has secured land for a future Youth & Family Hub. The project aims to consolidate into one facility that can serve the full spectrum of family needs, from infants to young adults.

The non-profit's current youth hub has seen its numbers more than double within the last five years, according to Marg Cox, executive director of Point in Time. The future facility would allow the charity to bring all of its services under one roof, including those currently spread across two buildings and an additional rented space, while also addressing the shortage of space.

"As I've been saying for years, we're breaking apart at the seams in the existing youth hub," Cox said in a Oct. 7 telephone interview. "We desperately need new space there."

Cox explained the facility, dubbed Point in Time Youth and Family Hub for Haliburton County, will be built on a four-acre property just down the road from Haliburton Highlands Secondary School. An existing house remains on the property currently, but its fate is unclear at the early stages of planning.

"A number of years ago, we looked at the possibility of actually buying that house for the existing hub site, but because it's residential code, it wouldn't stand up to our requirements as a commercial or industrial operation," she said. "So, the property itself is a lot bigger than the house, though. It's almost four acres."

> ***"We know this is a healthy thing for our community. It's really a great way to help us build a local community, help us support our young people."***
>
> — Marg Cox, Point in Time

Point in Time will require about half the property for the planned hub and there are plans to sever and sell the other half of the property to help offset the cost of the facility.

On the youth services side of the hub, the future building will provide a larger area to allow for a dedicated area for youth to relax or decompress, in a quiet space, an area for studying and homework. Private and semi-private spaces for playing games, chatting, and meeting with staff.

"What we actually need is a place where youth feel safe and comfortable," the executive director said. "And they want to come because there's fun things happening. And slowly over time, if they want to, and once they've got to know the staff, they can seek the support of peer support, counselling, nurse practitioner, etc.

"But it's in no way necessary," she said.

Funding for the project will be a combination of government grants, private donations, as well as some work-in-kind support.

"We're really looking at all possibilities," Cox said. "And we've been working with (MPP) Laurie Scott to see if there is funding, what kind of grant opportunities there might be. We're hoping to build something that's very environmentally sound and very energy efficient. There may be some additional grants available to help support those kinds of builds."

Point in Time will also benefit from the sale of its current youth hub as the charity owns the building outright.

The project itself is still in the very early stages, Cox explained. Despite a desire to have the facility open immediately, the realistic timeline is at least two or more years, factoring in land severing, which alone can take up to a year. The estimated total cost is still to be determined as the organization moves from the initial dreaming phase into realistic budgeting and detailed planning.

As for community support, there are many ways for residents to help. Whether it's financial or in-kind donations or pointing the organization toward publicly funded solutions through connections, Cox said. But more importantly, people can help by getting "behind the need for this in our community and help be a voice of public support."

"We know that COVID has been really hard on everyone, right, between job loss and all the kinds of mental health concerns that people have had. We also know that substance use has increased significantly during COVID," she said. "We know this is a healthy thing for our community. It's really a great way to help us build a local community, help us support our young people.

"So if there's anything anybody thinks they can do to get behind this project, please do it," Cox said.

Residents opposed to development on Centre Lake

from page 1

developer. In 2024, council also resolved not to close and transfer an existing, unopened road allowance on the property. A public meeting for the subdivision plan itself was held by the County of Haliburton in 2022, though the county has yet to issue a decision.

A key element of the current proposal centres on how the lots would access the lake. The land immediately butting against the water consists of Crown reserve of 60 metres, with the first 20 metres of that being the SRA. Since the proposed lots would not directly touch the water, owners would need to cross both publicly owned sections - the SRA and the Crown land - to reach the shoreline.

The proposed Official Plan Amendment (OPA) aims to create an exemption allowing the new lots to be recognized as having shoreline frontage. This would essentially treat the proposed subdivision as a typical waterfront development, even though it is backed against public Crown land and the SRA.

The required Zoning Bylaw Amendment would rezone the public Crown land and SRA to an Open Space Recreation Zone, limiting it to passive recreational use. It would then zone the development lands themselves to an appropriate Shoreline Residential Zone and designate natural features within the project area as Environmental Protection.

The proposal is facing significant pushback from various agencies and the local community, primarily due to environmental concerns.

The County of Haliburton arranged for a third-party peer review of the developer's environmental studies. The review reportedly identified gaps in the information, concluding that the environmental data provided was insufficient to confirm the development would not harm sensitive surrounding habitats, particularly those supporting species at risk.

Residents also made their opposition clear. Dozens of people submitted letters to the municipality, and a petition opposing the development had been submitted with more than 140 signatures.

"The proposal would fundamentally alter the character of Centre Lake, erode established planning safeguards, consume the lake's entire recreational capacity, and set a precedent for piecemeal, developer-driven planning that is contrary to the comprehensive and cumulative approach demanded by provincial and municipal policy," resident Krystle Shannon wrote to council.

"Centre Lake in its natural state is an oligotrophic shallow lake which combination is very rare and therefore, the lake is an exceedingly important natural site for lake science. Specifically, its value in being able to see the status of sensitive lakes and in comparison to human impacts on developed lakes is an unparalleled opportunity in the Highlands," The Land Between charity wrote. "The development of this lake would be a loss to fisheries management aspects and for the knowledge it could contribute to the public sphere on stewarding lake health."

Council will now weigh the developer's plans and the proposed changes against the environmental assessments and the expressed will of residents, and a decision will be made at a later date.

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Mega Munch set to battle winter with gourmet comfort food

ADAM FRISK

Journalist

Mega Munch Food Truck pictured on Oct. 9. /ADAM FRISK staff

Mega Munch is gearing up to launch its winter menu, a move that reflects both the challenges and the dedication of a small, family-run business that has been serving the community for eight years.

Despite some recent setbacks, including a break-in and the challenges of the industry, owners Adrian and Wendy Vargas remain dedicated to serving their loyal customers with mega portions and warm, hearty meals.

Opened in 2018, Mega Munch marked its eighth season in business this past summer. The owners, a husband-and-wife team who run the operation with family support, including Wendy's mother and a son who has since gone off to college, note that business has been "busier every year" since they opened.

"Which is a good thing, it's always getting busier," Adrian said in a recent interview. "Every year it's getting busier, which is awesome."

The COVID-19 pandemic, which proved difficult for many businesses, was a period of surprising growth for the food truck.

"It was awesome for us," Wendy recalled.

"Take out, no contact, absolutely," Adrian said.

"We were delivering it out to the car. For us, it went really well," Wendy said, noting that the smaller, family-run nature of the business allowed them to adapt quickly.

But like most businesses, there have been some ups and downs over the last eight years.

"The ups are the customer satisfaction and seeing the people that we see day in and day out because we have a lot of regulars, a lot of locals," Wendy said. "It's really the satisfaction knowing that people are enjoying what we are doing and we're enjoying doing it for them."

The Vargas said they cherish their regulars, with the majority of their business coming from locals, and find joy in hearing praise like, "Oh my god, this is the best burger I've ever had."

However, some of the "downs" include a recent break-in, which Adrian described as "very unfortunate," and the sheer amount of work the couple put into the business every day. The owners said they put in 11 to 12-hour days, and their "days off" are spent driving out of town to secure supplies at a lower cost, which helps keep menu prices from skyrocketing.

Outside of the daily grind, the Vargas are committed to family first. They've had to close unexpectedly - sometimes due to extreme summer heat impacting their older, family staff, and other times for serious personal and family medical needs.

"People don't understand how much that hurts us because we're not making money but we're still paying all the bills," Adrian noted.

"People tend to forget that we are actually a family and not just a business," Wendy added.

"Family is first, and that's always been our motto, family first," Adrian said.

To work through the winter, the food truck must undergo a significant transformation. The first winter in operation, they tried to keep their full summer menu, but the required airflow for the propane meant leaving a side door open in the freezing cold.

"It was torture," Wendy explained.

The solution for the owners was a complete shift to a new winter menu that doesn't rely on the deep fryer or grill.

"So, Adrian came up with the bright idea to do sandwiches," the wife said.

Mega Munch's winter menu is all about hearty comfort food. The big sandwiches, featuring their best-selling Reuben, Montreal smoked meat, homemade meatballs, and the massive Mega Mac Sandwich. Homemade chili is also a popular menu item. And there are pot pies, including Adrian's favourite steak and onion, made fresh by a local butcher. They also offer three different soup flavours a day, a choice meant to please every customer.

The owners stress that they are not about "gouging people" and have worked hard to keep prices as low as possible, despite inflation.

"We try to keep our prices as low as we can, but we try to give you the portions for it," they both said. "It's comfort food. It's winter, a stick-to-your-bones kind of food."

The food truck will shut down for approximately three weeks in late October to early November for a complete winter changeover, which involves deep cleaning and reconfiguration of the entire kitchen setup. They hope to be open and ready to serve their warm comfort food by mid- to late-November.

An afternoon with Linden MacIntyre

JANET TRULL

Guest Columnist

Libraries are at their very best in autumn, a season of shortening days and lengthening reading time. The Friends of the Haliburton County Public Library are very happy to announce their annual fundraising event will be An Afternoon with Linden MacIntyre.

An insightful journalist and author, MacIntyre is at his best covering controversial topics. His latest book, *An Accidental Villain*, takes the reader to Ireland in 1920. The Sinn Féin political party and the Irish Republican Army were determined to free the country from British authority. England was determined that wouldn't happen. Enter Sir Hugh Tudor, a major-general in the recent World War. Europe was just starting to recover from the horrors of trench warfare when the I.R.A. uprising got under Winston Churchill's skin. As Minister of War, he called his buddy Hugh Tudor to assemble a police force of 10,000 war veterans and knock some sense into the Irish once and for all. Known as the Black and Tans, because of their mismatched uniforms, they were baffled by the I.R.A's terrorist tactics. Tudor and his men doubled down with ruthless retribution, claiming the Irish were traitors. They started a systematic series of assassinations and ambushes. If an English police officer was killed, Tudor and his men would punish the entire village where it happened by burning homes and looting businesses. The conflict included Bloody Sunday when police opened fire on civilians during a football match.

Hugh Tudor left Great Britain and emigrated to Newfoundland in 1925. What were the circumstances surrounding his plummet from decorated war hero to accidental villain? Join the Friends of the Library on Nov. 2 at the Haliburton Legion and find out more about this tragic era of Irish history. Doors open at 1 p.m. for silent auction viewing, and the presentation is at 2 p.m. Tickets for An Afternoon with Linden MacIntyre are $25. They are available from board members. In Minden call Sue 705-286-2000 or Penni 705-286-3276. In Haliburton, Call Lorry 705-457-7924. Proceeds go to library programs, equipment and book club sets. The Friends of the Library thank local sponsors, contributors to the silent auction and Friends of the Library members for their generous participation in this annual fundraiser.

Haliburton Forest plants monumental manoomin seeds

THOMAS SMITH
Journalist

Tegan Legge holds some manoomin while harvesting it on Rice Lake near Hiawatha First Nation. /submitted

Haliburton Forest has taken a monumental step in fostering a relationship between their company and members of the Williams Treaties First Nations.

The process started six years ago, when Haliburton Forest's General Manager Tegan Legge and Canadian Bushcraft's Caleb Musgrave discussed ways in which the Forest could better support Indigenous communities in Ontario.

Haliburton Forest's base camp is located at 1035 Redkenn Road in Haliburton, and their property stretches across 100,000 acres to the southern tip of Algonquin Park and Powderhorn Lake to the west.

The managing director at the time asked them what could be the quickest and easiest way for the company to work towards earning their PAIR certification (Partnership Accreditation in Indigenous Relations).

Musgrave was quick to say that growing manoomin, often called Northern wild rice, would be both the most cost effective and quickest way to begin the collaboration.

Musgrave is an Anishinaabe Knowledge Holder, storyteller, woodsman, and outdoor survival expert who has taught traditional Anishinaabe knowledge and survival skills for 18 years.

Musgrave's company, Canadian Bushcraft, is owned and operated in Hiawatha First Nation and is dedicated to teaching people about land-based tools and techniques. Teaching over 20,000 students over his career, some of the topics have included food gathering, harvesting, canoe building, and basket weaving. Musgrave is dedicated to teaching traditional ecological knowledge and archaeology. He also hosts the *Canadian Bushcraft Podcast, with Caleb Musgrave,* with which he discusses everything related to survival and hunting through stories and candid experiences.

This will be the second time that Musgrave has used his knowledge of manoomin to help a company in planting their own patches of wild rice.

"We're always thinking of ways of bringing more Indigenous culture to the Forest," said Legge.

Together, the pair found four lakes that were suitable for planting manoomin. One in the northern end, two in the eastern area, and one near the main corridor of the forest.

The lakes were selected because they received little traffic and had no cottages or campsites on them; entirely separate from any other lake in Haliburton County. These landlocked lakes are privately owned, and have creeks flowing into them which provide fresh and clean water directly from the forest.

Manoomin requires specific conditions to grow, says Musgrave. The plant will not grow in water that is deeper than five feet. It also requires a silty bottom with a large amount of organic matter and will not grow in rocks or sand.

"Manoomin is a very durable plant once it is established," said he said.

It is traditionally collected by canoe using knocking sticks to free the seeds from the plant. During this process, typically a third of the rice is released back into the water. This process allows the plant to grow future generations of manoomin. As the seeds enter the water and become saturated, the rice descends to embed itself into the sediment at the bottom. With small seeds, the manoomin needs precise conditions for the plant to have enough energy to reach towards sunlight, and propagate itself before the end of the season.

Manoomin seeds must also be kept moist, or risk becoming unviable.

After collecting the manoomin on Rice Lake, the harvest is divided up to ensure that the local community has enough of it as a food source. People are also given manoomin seeds to reseed their own wild rice patches.

Using a cleaning process, no invasive species are capable of entering the water in Haliburton County, says Legge.

Planting the manoomin across the four lakes took a half a day and was conducted in November of last year.

"We went in with no expectations," said Legge. "However, we did have our hopes."

In July of this year, Legge was ecstatic to see manoomin floating on the top of the lakes.

When in bloom, the manoomin is stunning, with pink and yellow flowers.

"It's like being a proud gardener," said Legge. "I'm a proud mom watching my little plants grow."

Unfortunately, one of the lakes seeded with manoomin did not have new growth. Legge says that the section of the lake they seeded did not meet the right conditions for growth, perhaps due to the sun in their eyes after a long day of seeding.

Legge says that there are no records of manoomin growing in any of the 100 lakes across the 100,000 acres of Haliburton Forest.

However, this could very likely be due to human or environmental factors. The range of the species extends well past Haliburton into regions of Northern Ontario. It is very likely that manoomin could have grown there in the past, there is just a lack of evidence.

One of the most well known waterbodies for manoomin in Ontario is Rice Lake.

Musgrave says that in the past, Rice Lake was a prolific producer of manoomin for those harvesting in the Mississauga Anishinaabeg territory. In the 1920s, 10,000 bushels of manoomin were harvested from Rice Lake, meaning that 620,000 pounds of rice could be harvested annually in the past.

When the Trent-Severn waterway was constructed, many of the rice beds were flooded. Pigeon Lake was born from the flooding of the Trent-Severn, converting what used to be swampy marsh land into the small lake that is known today.

There has been a lot of negativity around manoomin. Select cottagers disliked it, saying that it is invasive, reduces the price of their property, and reduces the ability to access the water.

Keep in mind that manoomin was here long before the cottages were.

Tensions are high on Rice and Pigeon Lake, with property owners accusing Anishinaabeg rice harvesters of planting seeds illegally. In Pigeon Lake, Parks Canada has had to erect signs indicating the boundaries of a Wild

see RECONNECTING page 15

Reconnecting with nature at Haliburton Forest

from page 14

Rice Protection Zone.

The destruction of manoomin is illegal.

Musgrave says that during some harvests, Anishinaabeg harvesters had to be escorted and protected by the OPP.

"It was actually kind of heartwarming," said Musgrave. "We've been fearful for our lives and for our safety."

Realistically, manoomin is an indicator of a healthy and diverse ecosystem. The floating vegetation provides ample shelter for fish fry. As bigger fish hunt around the vegetation, it brings birds of prey and shorebirds that eat the fish or seeds themselves, says Musgrave.

When manoomin becomes established in Haliburton Forest, Musgrave and Legge agree that the lakes will become a special place of education for future generations.

As a privately owned space that is open to Musgrave and members of the Williams Treaties First Nations, people can visit Haliburton Forest without fear of harassment.

Legge says that Haliburton Forest will be operating a harvesting list, providing Indigenous Peoples with naturally harvested goods like birch bark, spruce roots, and other medicines.

With Haliburton Forest's biologists monitoring water conditions, the manoomin is assured to be of a high quality.

Musgrave says that the manoomin grown in places like Rice and Pigeon Lake can easily be contaminated with runoff and heavy metals that are dangerous to human health.

In the future, Musgrave wants to bring more First Nations community members into the forest to learn how to harvest manoomin, prepare it, and use it in ceremony.

Haliburton Forest is fully supporting the opening of their land, encouraging generational knowledge, and providing a guaranteed safe harvest site.

From Haliburton Forest's perspective, the reception to the manoomin has been terrific. Primarily, the biggest supporters have been the hunters that visit.

> *"I have yet to hear about any private forests that are working with their Indigenous communities in such a manner ...*
>
> — Tegan Legge, Haliburton Forest

More vegetation on the lakes encourages more ducks to visit and nest. Some hunters have even shown an interest in growing their own manoomin.

For seasonal hunters, the manoomin will mean a better quality of meat, future generations of waterfowl, and opportunities to harvest from the land.

"Our hunters are really excited about this happening on the property," said Legge. "They understand the environmental benefits and how it will attract more waterfowl."

"I have yet to hear about any private forests that are working with their Indigenous communities in such a manner," she said.

Both Legge and Musgrave consider this planting of manoomin a monumental undertaking which will inspire and inform other businesses across Canada.

"Manoomin is a crucial part to Anishinaabe identity," said Musgrave. "I would like to thank Haliburton Forest for strengthening that relationship."

The *Canadian Bushcraft Podcast, with Caleb Musgrave* is available on Apple Podcasts and Spotify.

Caleb Musgrave harvests manoomin on Rice Lake using rice knockers. /Submitted

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Play ball!

The Haliburton Highlands Red Hawks girls basketball teams have been busy, with the junior team winning against Norwood 19-17 and the senior team fighting hard, but falling to Fenelon Falls 20-46 this past week. Basketball is one of the many sports that the high school has kicked off early in the semester. /TIM YANO staff photographer

Razzamataz ready for new season

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

For nearly 40 years, Razzamataz Kids' Shows have brought high-quality, diverse and affordable theatre to children and families in Haliburton County.

And this season will be no different.

Chair of the not-for-profit organization, Nicole Stewart, has worked diligently to source stand-out theatre to bring back to the community. "Last year, I met with Children's Theatre Presenters from across Northern Ontario to develop an exciting and interesting line-up of performers to tour in the region," she said. "Each year, we work together with Ontario Presents to choose high-quality, diverse performances and artists to come to our small towns. In the spring, I also visited the Ottawa Children's Festival to search for professional Canadian and International shows that we could bring back to the county to perform."

It takes dedication and hard work, but Stewart and the volunteer supporters she works with believes in bringing theatre to kids in the community. Last year, in an effort to expand their audiences, they completed a grant to bring a show to the local schools, allowing 250 kids to see a performance, completely free of charge.

This year, they will be bringing that initiative back. "This season, we're inviting children from Stuart Baker and Cardiff Elementary School to enjoy *The Old Man and the River, WeeFestival, ON*," she said. "Through this new initiative, we are able to reach a large audience of children and share the wonder of high-quality theatre while breaking down financial barriers to the arts."

Characters in the upcoming Razzamataz show, *Silly Billy*. /submitted

Stewart noted that these performances are made possible through the generous support of the Haliburton County Development Corporation, Canoe FM, The Haliburton Arts Council, Kennisis Lake Cottage Association, the Rotary Club of Haliburton and the Trillium Lakes District School Board.

On top of the free performances for the schools, Razzamataz will once again be offering four public shows, catered to kids of all ages, with all welcome to attend. The season will be kicking off with *Silly Billy;* a whimsical and heartfelt dance-theatre production blending hoop dance, ballet, puppetry, and storytelling. At the heart of the story is Billy, a rare white buffalo, unhappy with his uniqueness, who embarks on a quest to find the mythical Unicorn. Through playful mishaps, enchanting adventures, and moments of self-discovery, Billy learns to embrace his difference and takes his rightful place as the legendary great white buffalo of the plains.

Other shows include: *the Chimera Project, ON* with ballet and Indigenous dance, shadow puppets and storytelling; *Somebody Loves You Mr. Hatch, Axis Theatre, BC* with puppets, singing and a heart-warming story about a secret admirer; *The Old Man and the River, WeeFestival, ON* - a story without words featuring beautiful puppetry; and environmental-themed music from award-winning Canadian musician, Chris McKhool.

Stewart noted that on top of the shows, there will also be three workshops including Indigenous hoop dancing, puppets and music. More information and tickets can be purchased at razzamataz.ca.

The shows take dedication and time, and Stewart and the Razzamataz committee are thrilled to put in the work, and bring these shows to the community. But it takes a village to keep the programs afloat. "We are run entirely by volunteers and funded by government partners and the generous donations of non-profit and charitable organizations in the community," said Stewart. "The work that we do relies on donations and the goodwill of others. In order to continue to do what we do and to do more, we are searching for financial support from business and individuals - please consider becoming a sponsor today."

Stewart hopes to continue to bring these shows to the community for many years to come, and welcomes all to the performances over the season. *Silly Billy* kicks off the season on Oct. 26 at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion at 2 p.m.

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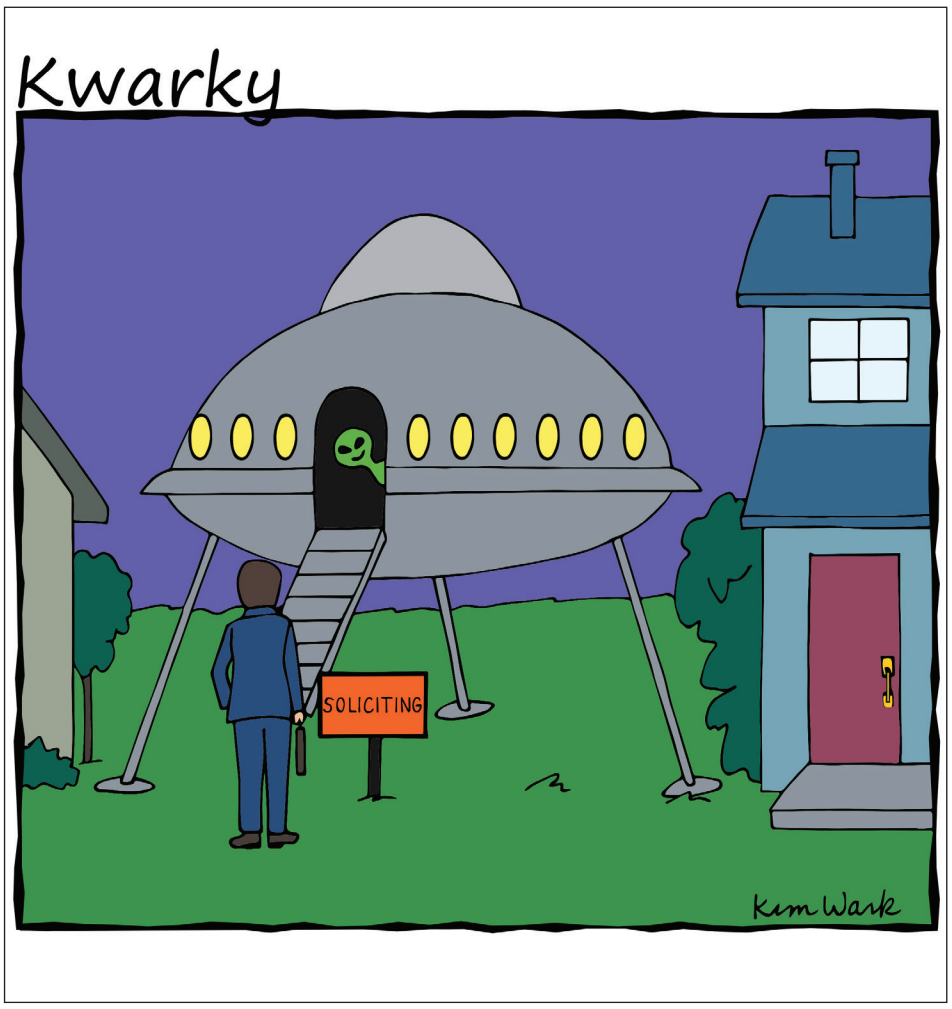

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SUDOKU

	9			5			8	
		5			7			
7	6					1		
				1		4	7	
		7	2					
4		2	6				3	
9			7					
2	3		9			5		7
5			3		6	2	9	

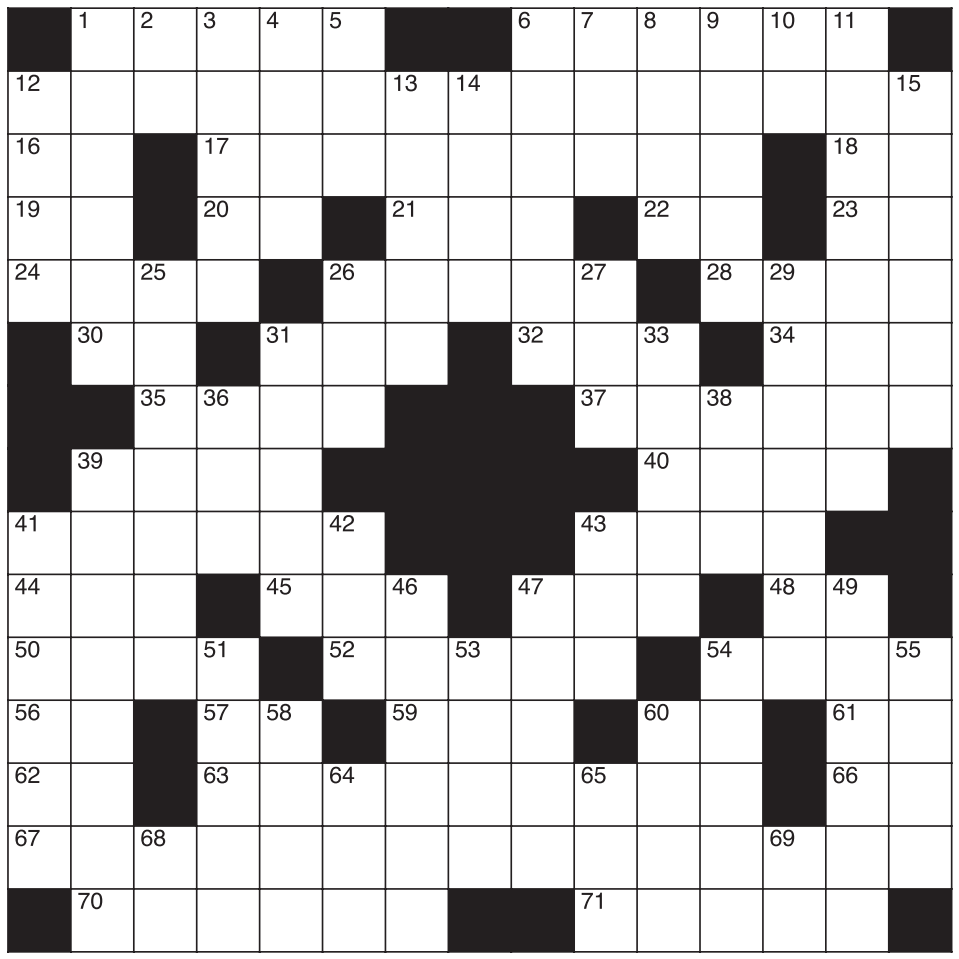
Level: Beginner

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers on page 19



CLUES ACROSS
1. Martial arts in China
6. The butt of jokes
12. Nevertheless
16. Sportscaster Michaels
17. A firm believer
18. Atomic #18
19. OneÕs bestie
20. Of I
21. Hamburger accessory
22. Thus
23. Partner to Pa
24. Scottish tax
26. Cuts away
28. Require
30. Government lawyer
31. Own (Scottish)
32. Body cavity
34. Brew
35. Young woman (French)
37. Platforms
39. Pair of points in mathematics
40. Attack suddenly
41. Aviators
43. Make perfect
44. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
45. Neither
47. The center of a city
48. Sacrifice hit in baseball
50. Singer Redding
52. Dragged forcibly
54. Puncture with a knife
56. Belonging to me
57. Expresses surprise
59. Haul
60. The Golden State
61. Biblical Sumerian city
62. Integrated circuit
63. Opposed to certain principles
66. Sodium
67. Qualities
70. Walk
71. It awaits us all

CLUES DOWN
1. Ate quickly
2. Peyton ManningÕs alma mater
3. Moves through water
4. Run away from
5. Utah resident
6. Natural objects
7. ChildrenÕs game
8. Obligation to prove
9. Ancient Greek building for performances
10. Soldier
11. Decorated
12. Catches
13. Russell __, author
14. Speak indistinctly
15. Students get them
25. Japanese warrior
26. Dessert
27. Doleful
29. Most cushy
31. Moon crater
33. Small evergreen Arabian tree
36. Something fugitives are ÒonÓ
38. 007Õs creator
39. Paintings on hinged panels
41. Type of bomb
42. Japanese classical theater
43. U.S. govÕt department
46. Flightless bird
47. One who cuts wood or stone
49. Buttock and thigh together
51. A way to gather
53. Body part
54. Argentinian city
55. Undergarments
58. Jai __, sport
60. Container for shipping
64. Type of screen
65. Get free of
68. Indicates position
69. Business department

Answers on page 19

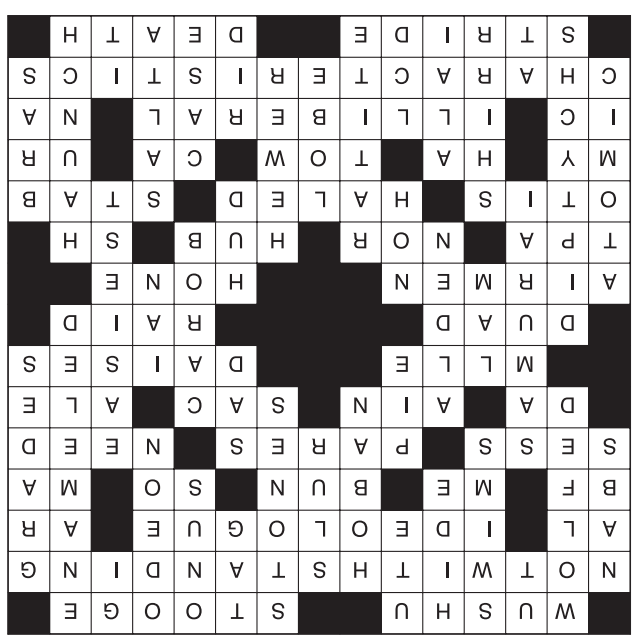
Picnic with a view

The Rotary Club of Haliburton worked alongside Diezel Woodworks to create a picnic structure up at Skyline Park in Haliburton. The vision is a part of an ongoing beautification project, undertaken by the local Rotary Club, and is available for picnics and shelter as of this past week. The modifications and improvements to the highly-visited tourism destination will continue forward with Rotary taking the lead on the project, with support from community partners and funding initiatives. /TIM YANO staff photographer

SUDOKU SOLUTION

1	9	3	4	5	2	7	8	6
8	2	5	1	6	7	3	4	9
7	6	4	8	3	9	1	2	5
6	8	9	5	1	3	4	7	2
3	1	7	2	9	4	6	5	8
4	5	2	6	7	8	9	3	1
9	4	6	7	2	5	8	1	3
2	3	8	9	4	1	5	6	7
5	7	1	3	8	6	2	9	4

CROSSWORD ANSWERS



Snowflake Meadows fundraiser kicks off

I'm so excited to announce our upcoming auction!

Here's how you can help:

Donations: As of Oct. 8, 2025, I will be collecting items such as gift baskets, handmade goods, services, gift cards, and more! Every little bit helps make this event a success.

Deadline: To be included in the auction, donations should be received by Nov. 24, 2025

Please call or text if you'd like to donate to the online auction: 289-338-3429

Auction Details:

The online auction will run from Dec. 1, 2025 until Dec. 15, 2025. Bidding will take place on our Facebook page. "Snowflake Meadows Annual Christmas Auction"all proceeds go directly to Snowflake Meadows to cover medical care, food, and safe housing for the dogs.

Expectations:

* Please ensure items are clean and in good condition.
* Gift cards/services should include clear details and expiration dates if applicable.
* Monetary donations are also welcomed via snowflakemeadowsrescue@gmail.com

Every donation - big or small - makes a difference in giving these dogs a second chance at life. Thank you for supporting Snowflake Meadows and helping us reach our goal! Let's try and get $10,000 this year!

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COMING EVENTS

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Saturday, October 18, 2025
12pm – 3:30pm

FREE

Workshop starts at Minden Cultural Centre
Planting follows at Hyland Crest Long-Term Care

As part of this workshop designed for seniors, you will learn techniques for fall planting and caring for spring bulbs, shrubs and flowering perennials plus participate in planting "Betty's Garden" at Hyland Crest

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The Haliburton County Public Library is recruiting for:

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This vacant position is responsible for managing the library's online presence as guided by the strategic plan, including recommending, implementing and managing electronic resources and the library's automated systems; maintaining the library's website; providing library staff and patrons with digital literacy skills training, and resolving technical issues across the library system in collaboration with County IT. This hourly range for this full-time position is $32.29 - $37.77 (70 hours biweekly).

PUBLIC SERVICES MANAGER/DEPUTY CEO
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Visit the County of Haliburton's Careers page at www.haliburtoncounty.ca/careers for more information, and a detailed job description. Applications should identify position and PDF resumes and cover letters should be sent to info@haliburtonlibrary.ca no later than **October 27, 2025, at noon.**

We thank all who apply for this position. Only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

The County of Haliburton is committed to an inclusive, barrier-free environment. If you require accommodation options to ensure full and equal access during the recruitment process, please contact Human Resources at shume@haliburtoncounty.ca.

In accordance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, the information gathered will be used solely for the purpose of job selection.

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OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory of

(Douglas) Jay Roland

August 19, 2025

Following an illness, Jay Roland, at the age of 65, peacefully slipped away.

Born to Lorna (Yungblut) and John Roland, Jay's family lived in St. Catharines until he was a teenager. They moved north, settling in Minden and remaining there for 38 years, where they were embraced by the community as one of their own. Jay could often be found at his mother's side at Minden Bible Church, Horticulture Society, volunteering, or visiting with neighbours and friends, or with his father in the workshop. They left Minden 11 years ago, with Jay eventually moving to Fonthill. Again, with his outgoing personality, he soon had many friends in his new home at Short Hills Villa. His heart however, remained in Minden.

In addition to his parents, Jay was predeceased by his Aunt Brenda (Yungblut) and John Rice, his Uncle Dean Roland, his grandparents, Wilford & Gladys (Sherwin) Yungblut and Don & Ivy (Boxer) Roland. He is fondly remembered by his many second cousins and friends.

A memorial service was held at the North Pelham Presbyterian Church on September 13 in Niagara. A graveside service will be held at the Minden Cemetery on Saturday, November 1, at 1pm. Refreshments to follow at the Minden Bible Church.

Donations may be made in Jay's name to Liver Canada, the Minden Bible Church (special building fund for lift), or a charity of your choice.

Keeping in touch by phone was Jay's favourite way of connecting with people. If you knew Jay at all … you probably know this! We would ask that in his memory, you pick up the phone and give someone a call. Whether it be someone close to you that you don't talk to often enough, or someone you haven't spoken to in ages. Let this be Jay's legacy – to make a person you care about, feel remembered. His phone is silent now.

IN MEMORIUM

Tarleton, Shirley

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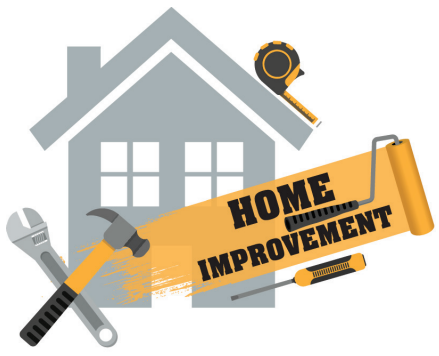

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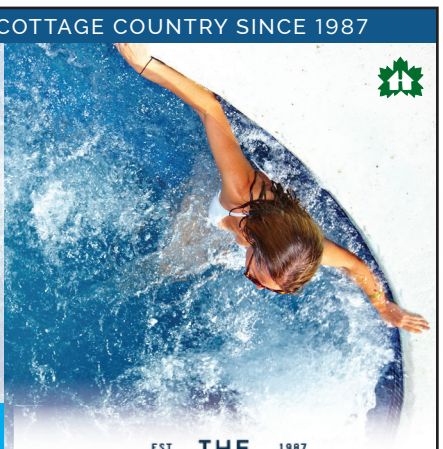

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THE HALIBURTON COUNTY ECHO
AND MINDEN RECORDER
Vol. 105 No. 2 Wednesday, October 22, 1986 'Voice of the Highlands' 16 pages 40 cents

Warden Harry Davis reflects on a year of accomplishments as officials, friends gather to say thanks

Warden Harry Davis talked of his busy year attending meetings, officiating at functions and representing his county and while this meant being away from his wife Irene at nights, Davis said his efforts were well worth it. Sitting beside Davis at Saturdays Wardens Banquet was MPP John Eakins.

Warden looks back on a year of change

By MARTHA PERKINS
Staff Reporter

Even though he is a man renowned for his sense of humour and lighthearted replies, Warden Harry Davis found it difficult to keep the emotion out of his voice as he said goodbye to a year filled with many late nights and long hours, but many rewarding experiences as well.

"This is the time of year when every warden does a lot of soul searching and wonders whether any of their hopes and aspirations have been realized," Davis said to his 100 guests who gathered together Saturday evening to honour the man who has been the county's chief executive officer for the past year. "It's been a very busy year and I'm proud of the fact I've never missed a meeting. I want to publically thank county council members because without your hard work and support, this would not be possible."

That year of meetings included seven county council meetings, 32 special meetings, 48 committee meetings and 30 functions, such as the museum addition opening and the county fair.

It also saw the approval of a consolidated welfare system, a favourite goal of Davis' who said it would mean a more efficient, fair and professional service throughout all of Haliburton. County council unanimously approved a 20-bed chronic care unit for the Haliburton Hospital and Davis used this opportunity to announce the provincial government has decided to pay for two-thirds of the costs instead of the originally agreed to 50 percent funding. Davis pointed out this was particularly "encouraging news" since it would save the county $450,000.

The year saw many new faces at the county level. A new administrator at Hyland Crest and a new county librarian were hired after a nationwide appeal for interested candidates and Gary McKnight finished his first year as the county's new clerk-treasurer, a role he has filled admirably, Davis said.

"It's been a real pleasure to be your servant," the popular warden said, closing his speech with a quotation from a story called The Station, by Robert Hastings.

Tucked away in our mind is an idyllic vision in which we are travelling by passenger train, Davis read. We pass the high mountains and the flat plains throughout all the seasons, but uppermost in our minds is a certain destination.

We believe once we reach that station, our dreams will be fulfilled and the scattered parts of our lives will fit together with the clarity of a jig saw puzzle.

But once we reach that station, we find out "the true joy of life is the trip -- the station is just a dream." Once we reach the station we find out the stations ahead of us are endless. As you set goals for yourself (once I get my Mercedes I'll be happy....once I get my house in the country I'll be happy....once I see my children grow and prosper I'll be

Please turn to Page 3

Parents lose Victoria board battle

Parents who banded together to oppose a Victoria County Board of Education plan to close five small schools in the northern end of the county and build two new ones appear to have lost their battle. At a special meeting last Tuesday, the board voted in favour of proceeding with the new schools "as soon as financially feasible."

Those opposed to the idea of two larger schools to replace the five smaller ones used the familiar arguements about negative effects on the small communities, busing distances, costs and the quality of education available in small schools. Those who favoured the concept of two larger schools emphasized the need for better facilities and the educational and social benefits to the children.

The five schools that will be closed as early as August 30 next year are located in Kinmount, Burnt River, Coboconk, Norland and Kirkfield.

The board agreed that each of the schools should serve a different geographic area. One will be built in the Bexley-Eldon Township area, and would serve youngsters from Norland, Kirkfield and part of Coboconk. The other new school would be built in the Sommerville Township district to serve students from Kinmount, Burnt River and a portion of Coboconk. Both schools would have approximately 250 students.

While last Tuesday's decision paves the way for the new schools, details of funding remain to be worked out with the provincial government, and it is possible the five existing schools will continue to operate beyond the August 30, 1987 deadline for earliest possible closure.

Once the new schools are in operation, the five unused school buildings are expected to be offered to the municipalities in which they are located, for community use.

Although some people opposed to the board's edcision have vowed to keep protesting it, there is almost no chance that Tuesday's decision can be reversed, unless the necessary provincial assistance for the project is denied.

New loan aid scheme will boost tourism

By MARTHA PERKINS
Staff Reporter

Now is not the time to be complacent about Eastern Ontario's tourist attractions and instead, we should be building on our strengths and developing new opportunities, said the Minister of Tourism and Recreation as he announced a new tourism iniative -- Directions East.

Directions East is a set of seven programs designed to help small establishments upgrade and improve their facilities, especially those which cater to the needs of handicapped people. Even though the Haliburton Highlands is a member of the Central Ontario Tourism Association, the county lies in the eastern half of the province, enabling local tourist businesses to apply to the program.

The Capital Assistance Program is designed to help campgrounds, commercial ski resort operations, licenced commercial roofed accomodations and attractions. The two categories of the loan are interest and principal payment free for up to five years.

Eligible businesses can get funding for up to 50 percent of the project costs for renovations or $100,000, whichever is less while the second category is applicable for expansion costs of 50 percent funding or $150,000, whichever is less.

Because inland lakes, the Trent Severn Waterway and the Thousand Islands have been such popular vaction spots for many years, the Commercial Tourist Marina project will help waterfront facilities undergo renovations, improve transient dockage and upgrade on-shore service facilities.

Please turn to Page 3

Child Identification programme:

Civitan club photographs and fingerprints 139 local youngsters

By MARTHA PERKINS
Staff Reporter

There was a better response than expected last Saturday when dozens of parents brought their children to the Haliburton Legion to have their photographs and fingerprints taken at the Child Identification Program.

"The parents were really in favour of this program and very appreciative of it," said Gerald Irish on Monday. There were 15 children getting their record sheets updated from the time the clinic was first held in Haliburton two years ago and 139 new children.

The program is sponsored by the Civitan Club of Newmarket, a community-minded group who believe they should pay their "civic rent" by donating some of their time and talents for the betterment of their community. The club started the program three and a half years ago when a young Queensville girl, Christine Jessup, disappeared from her home.

"At the time (a child disappears or is lost), the parent is not thinking coherently" and may have problems giving a precise description to the police, explains Civitan Brian Tegwell. His group decided to do something to help and contacted the police to ask what sort of information they would need if indeed a child did go missing.

When a child arrives at a clinic, his or her picture is taken with a black and while instant camera. Then the child is taken to a fingerprinting station where prints of each finger and the palm are taken. Getting the ink off dirty fingers is the next step before the child receives a sucker and colouring book full of the rules of what to do in scary situations, and safety procedures. The parent is given a form to fill out with such information such as height and weight, eye colour and birth date.

The information sheet is kept by the parents and no other copy is sent to anyone, including the police. Some parents think the fingerprints can be used for future reference but this is not the case.

Because a child's looks change, but not their fingerprints, parents are asked to attend a clinic every two years to get the picture updated. The cost is covered by the Civitan Club, with the parents asked to pay a dollar and the Legion providing the space and preliminary work.

"We hope it's a person's worst investment and they never have to use it," says Tegwell, a feeling shared by each and every person who attended the clinic.

Five-year-old Andrew Burtch gets his mug shot taken by a Newmarket Civitan Club member as his mother Valerie holds Erin who is next in line. The Legion and Civitan Club sponsored the Identification program on Saturday to help record information on their children.

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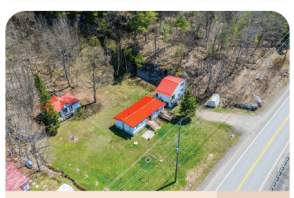

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